

Special Education Advisory Panel Meeting Minutes

Office of Public Instruction

Helena

May 12, 2005

Members in Attendance: Russ Bean, Diana Colgrove, Dick Slonaker, Norma Wadsworth, Janet Jansen, Gary Perleberg, Jeff Stelloh, Bob Maffit, Cody Sinnott, WyAnn Northrop, Holly Raser, Robert Peake

Members Excused: Bob Maffit, Steve Gibson

Non-Members in Attendance: Bob Runkel, Marilyn Pearson, Susan Bailey-Anderson, Tim Harris, Dick Trerise, Frank Podobnik, Pat Reichert, Marlene Wallis, Erica Peterson, Cathy Kendall, Dennis Moore, Lynn Hinch

Thursday, May 12, 2005

Chairman Russ Bean called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. He requested that the Panel members review the Proposed Agenda. Following review of the Proposed Agenda, Gary Perleberg moved to accept the proposed Agenda, Dick Slonaker seconded the motion and the motion passed. The minutes of the March 17-18, 2005, meeting were reviewed and Dick Slonaker moved to accept the minutes and Bob Peake seconded the motion. The motion passed and the minutes were approved as written.

Holly Raser returned to the Panel following the legislative session. She reported that the session went well for special education. Special education received more funding. Holly served on the committee for Quality Definition. She reported that Russ brought some wonderful ideas for school funding. Russ told the Panel members that Holly is a great advocate for education.

Report on OSEP Leadership Conference

WyAnn Northrup attended the OSEP Leadership Conference with Bob Runkel and Marilyn Pearson. She reported that the sessions of the conference were enlightening. She also said that she enjoyed meeting the Colorado Special Education Advisory Panel. WyAnn said that a subcommittee was made up of Panel members regarding Annual Yearly Progress (AYP). She noted that she is still waiting for an e-mail regarding AYP from the Colorado Education Department.

OPI Report

Legislation

Bob Runkel reported that Special Education did well financially during the legislative session. He said that Holly Raser carried our Special Education bill (SB363) on the House floor and it was successful, receiving only three "no" votes.

Bob discussed legislation concerning surrogate parents, CST, private/residential schools and licensure. He noted that SB363 will remove references to "CST," but reminded Panel members that the regulations need to change before the change can be implemented. Bob said that there are safety issues in licensure for private/residential schools in that parents sometimes live far

away and cannot oversee what is happening with their children. This leaves a vulnerable situation for the students.

Bob reported that the Braille bill passed. He said that textbook companies will have to convert electronic textbooks into an electronic format usable for producing Braille textbooks. According to the Act, textbooks cannot be purchased from a company that does not make available an electronic format unless the state provides some other means of guaranteeing that students will have quick access to a Braille version. The Act provides that there is a two-year window for states to implement a system that will provide speedy access to the electronic Braille textbooks.

Highly Qualified

Bob Runkel said that the issue of "highly qualified" continues to be a controversial subject. Interest is high particularly for those students enrolled in professional education university training programs.

We believe that, ultimately, Montana will develop a high objective uniform state standard of evaluation (HOUSSE). The purpose of the HOUSSE would be to verify teacher's competence to teach core academic subjects as required under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Electronic IEPs

Bob Runkel informed the Panel that last week a contract was released with a strategic planning firm from Butte to assist the state in planning for the electronic student information system. It is hoped that the Request for Proposals (RFP) will be released in late summer or early fall to implement a student information system that includes an electronic special education record system. Work on the system should begin next year and, hopefully, an electronic IEP system would be in place for the following school year. A major goal of the project is to have the special education system embedded within the larger general education student information system.

Application for Part B Funds Under IDEA; Proposed Policy Statement on Implementation of Special Education Procedures Under IDEA 2004

Marilyn Pearson said that the OPI is required to submit an application for Part B funds. The U.S. Department required, for the first time, that the application be presented to the general public. The general public is notified that they have an opportunity for written comments. The Proposed Policy Statement is included with the application. Marilyn reported that the public hearing regarding the IDEA Part B Application and the Proposed Policy statement will be held on June 15, 2005. This public hearing allows for comments on the application and the proposed policy statement.

CSPD

Susan Bailey-Anderson distributed copies of the Montana Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) Stakeholder Manual to the Panel members. She noted that the 2004 IDEA is silent about CSPD; however personnel development is a requirement. Susan explained that the CSPD is a sophisticated network in Montana. The flow chart in the manual shows how CSPD starts with the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Division of Special Education and flows down to Ad Hoc groups, including the new Ad Hoc group the Early Childhood Partnership in Professional Development. She informed the Panel that Montana is the only state

that that she is aware of that has CSPD requirements in Administrative Rule. She also said that the key component of Montana CSPD is collaboration. Members work closely with educators, parents and agencies throughout the region/state to implement the CSPD strategic plan and other activities developed by CSPD.

Early Intervention—Part C Services for Infants/Toddlers

Erica (Peterson) Swanson, Part C Coordinator, told the Panel that Part C Family Education and Support is a program of early intervention services for children with disabilities ages 0-36 months. Families with children who meet the eligibility criteria established by the state are entitled to a range of services defined under federal law. Services are delivered as part of an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) developed in cooperation with the family. She said that the state application is out for Public Notice. This application is submitted each year. There is no Public Hearing unless there are changes to the application. Erica said there are new regulations in December and the division is looking at stakeholders to prepare the program to be ready for July 1, 2006.

One section of the program is to prepare students for the transition from Part C to Part B and to make sure the transition is in compliance and smooth for the parents.

Dan McCarthy also discussed Part C Services for Infants/Toddlers.

Serving Students with Health Care Needs

Cathy Kendall, Director, Division of Health Enhancement, distributed the *Serving Students with Health Care Needs in Public Schools* technical assistance manual to Panel members. She told the Panel members that this document was updated in December 2004 and replaces the 1993 document. She said that she and Marilyn Pearson put together a task force to produce the updated document. The task force was made up of parents, OPI staff, general and special education administrators, school nurses, teachers, related service staff and Mountain Plains Regional Resource Center staff. The updated version is designed for school personnel and health care providers for a better understanding of how to provide services to students with health care needs in the educational environment.

A limited number of the manual was produced. It is available on the OPI Web site and 200 have been distributed on disks.

Parent Involvement

Dennis Moore, Director, Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK), provided an update on the growth of PLUK this past year. He said that PLUK does not pretend to have all the answers and will take all suggestions and new ideas. The number of parents has increased. Dennis said that there are now 17 boards, of which 12 are active.

Dennis distributed a new up-to-date staff list. In 2000, PLUK had five staff members. The average number of hours worked by staff has increased. There are now 13 staff members and 5 are full-time. This allows for better coverage of the state.

Trainings that have been recommended are: Fetal Alcohol Syndrome; Financial Planning for Families; Special Education Montana Teleconference; Autism; Asburger; and ADHD. Dennis

said that PLUK is working on the topic "Parents—How to Be Involved with Your Child's Education."

Dennis also informed the Panel that PLUK is in the process of revising a number of publications, i.e., First Steps, IEP Meetings and Transition. He said that PLUK welcomes suggestions for topics for handouts. The PLUK library has a large selection of materials available.

The PLUK has a list of trained volunteers who help parents realize they are not out there alone and provide assistance for parents who are concerned about their child going out into the public.

Limited English Proficiency

Lynn Hinch provided an update regarding Limited English Proficiency (LEP) from the information she provided the Panel a few years ago. She said the Criteria for Identification of LEP guideline she distributed to the Panel are the result of discussion with representatives of school districts in Montana with significant populations of LEP students.

Lynn also distributed a table of the LEP Count by Language for the 2004-2005 school year. The top languages include: Crow; Blackfeet; Sioux/Dakota; Assiniboine; Cheyenne; German; Salish; and Spanish.

Lynn also shared information on the District-level CRT Results by Subgroup. This table shows results by "All Students Combined," "Students with Disabilities," "Female and Male," "Languages," "Grades 4, 8 and 10," and "Regular Assessment and Alternate Assessment."

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Bob Runkel requested time to inform the Panel of issues coming up in the next year for the Panel. He said that next year's panel will have a heavy workload, including involvement in helping us establish new rules and regulations compatible with the anticipated federal regulations implementing the reauthorized Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004). It is likely that Panel members will be asked to serve on committees assigned the task of developing draft regulations. Advisory Panel members will be needed to guide our decisions. Additionally, the office intends on submitting an application to address reductions in paperwork. States will compete for 15 slots in a pilot study intended to provide reductions in paperwork. Russ Bean said he would be willing to work on the Paperwork Reduction Committee over the summer.

Agenda Items for Next Meeting

Review Annual Report
Review and Revise, if necessary, the Bylaws
Juvenile Justice
Paperwork Reduction

Elections

Two positions were up for nomination: Vice-Chairperson and Secretary.

Dick Slonaker nominated Diana Colgrove for Vice-Chairperson, Wyann Northrop seconded the motion, and Diana Colgrove was elected by acclamation.

WyAnn Northrop nominated Janet Jansen for Secretary, Norma Wadsworth seconded the motion and Janet Jansen was elected by acclamation.

Recognition of Retiring Panel Members

Russ Bean, representing State/Local Administrator, and Chairperson of the Panel has brought practicality and honesty to his position. Russ was presented with a plaque. Russ noted that he has enjoyed his time on the Panel.

Jeff Stelloh, representing Private Schools, was presented with a plaque. It was noted that Jeff's comments during his tenure have been very much appreciated.

Steve Gibson, representing Juvenile and Adult Corrections, was not in attendance, but will be presented with a plaque.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:34 p.m.